

A FLYER IN ANNUITIES

ANOTHER of Those Intensely Interesting Pod, Bender & Co. Stories by a Writer Who Ranks High in His Field.

After a few weeks spent in Bermuda, partly idling, partly dallying with certain trivial matters which, though petty, nevertheless kept the checkbook decently padded, Pod and the Doctor felt a yearning of the heart toward home.

"All very picturesque and nifty," the Doc remarked, from his rocker on the broad piazza of the Hamilton House, "but still, there's nothing like home, sweet home, after all."

Moodily his eyes wandered over the sparkling harbor, the sailboats, the white cottages and the turquoise of the broad Atlantic, beyond whose far horizon lay the Land of Graft Unlimited. Slats, catching his mood, nodded assent.

"'Getcha,'" he murmured, stretching his huge, white-linen-clad bulk beside his partner. "Pod, you're right. I've had him up to 27, with a steady tendency toward more. 'I getcha, Steve. Time to drift north. An' these pretty antie games here ain't a man-size opportunity to do deal with the real pit-there proposition again, that's all to the mustard. Well."

"Dally is right," said Ben. "There's a boat out here to New York this P.M. That's for us!"

"An' then?" queried Pod, with unusual ambition.

"Oh, I've been incubating an idea for some time concerning a certain fiduciary institution in the Hub that needs a little blood-letting to prevent it having a apoplexy, it's that top-heavy with the unearned increment. The time has come, I think, and my thinking now will be an east-and-west proposition. I pulled Act I in Chicago, on the Grangers' National Bank, last June. That's how I was flying high, but when you're in the Hotel de Gink, otherwise known as a bench in the park. Now I've got a hunch we can fly still lofier in Act II, on the strength of Act I. So let's go back to the bank, pack our keisters to lay a little paper in Velvetcburg, in the good old U. S. A.—Unlimited Suckers' Aggregation."

Somehow, in the afternoons, the passengers sat in a smoking compartment of the 1 o'clock limited out of New York, Boston bound. A curious trio they were, three ill-assorted elements from the big human hive. One, a somnolent, portly, balding brian, and read "The Alibi"; the second, a stout, gentleman, dressed in expensive though rather erratic dress, drew luxuriously at a black cigar, stared out the window, and snored; the third, a tall clergyman of reserved bearing, occupied himself steadfastly by looking up references in his pocket concerning and making copious notes in a portfolio.

Now and again the clergyman passed some remark about his pastoral duties or a forthcoming sermon, to which the stout gentleman replied by monosyllables, seemingly ill at ease in the presence of this man of the cloth.

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AT Providence the commercial traveler left the compartment, and no one took his place. In some curious manner he carried away with him the air of sanctity which permeated the atmosphere.

"Say, you petrified jelly-roll," remarked the clergyman as the train bowed out of the station, "toss us out a smoke, can't you? It gives me the wee-waws to play any place more than the hotel room, I tell you. But tell me, on the level, how does it go?"

"Like saline on a sore toe," answered the fat gentleman. "Only don't spread it too thick or some one may slip. You know, like a bum—he's only waiting to be shaken."

"One of the great and glorious tribe of E. Z. Marx," answered the clergyman striking a match by deft sniping at the cigarette-holder. "Ever! He'll fall for anything. I put the trimming-tools to him myself six years ago, but didn't score hard. That's why I'm so keen to come again and gather the ripe harvest. All things are fixed now, just like a bum—he's only waiting to be shaken."

"Listens good, but are you sure?"

"Just as sure as I am that these here Research set me back a quarter apiece, and that you're costing me like sixty. Sure! I should say yes! With our present lay we can get the jacks under his trust company and elevate it before he gets the idea of taking through the cranium what's being done. Just you watch and—cheese it! Come!"

"Tickets, please!" exclaimed that worthy, entering the compartment.

"I'll be good, and here I am holding out two pasteboards. 'My friend's and mine. Have you a time-table on the B. & M.? Yes, we're going through to Portland. You'll get me one? Ah, thank you, thank you, yes. It is good weather for traveling, though a trifle warm."

The conductor departed.

"How'd you do it?" inquired the stout gentleman, admiringly. "I thought I could just lie 'em along some, but say, you've got me beaten to a syllable! It's worth a gold mine to be study to an article like this."

"Heretics! Let's christen the church."

"The old green Gladstone bag and brought out a half-pint flask of very strong waters. Shortly thereafter the flask, eloquently empty, went spinning from a window of the express, which, clipping along in a simon-pure, due to the extreme shortening by a mile the distance between our two friends and President Abner Goodrich of the Commercial Trust Company, Boston, Mass.

The stout gentleman, President Goodrich came back from lunch he found waiting for him in his inner office two strangers. One of these, an austere clergyman, sat reading his briefcase, while the other, evidently an original, lolled back fatty in his chair and gazed vacantly at the offered ceiling.

Both rose to greet him; the clergyman first, through the open doorway, and finally produced a card which, after minute inspection, he presented to Goodrich.

"Francis G. Benedict," read the president. "Rector of St. Luke's Church, Roxbury."

"At your service, sir," murmured the clergyman, bowing. "Permit me the pleasure of making you acquainted with Mr. Bunker—Michael J. Hogan of my parish."

"Glad to know you!" exclaimed Hogan, much embarrassed. He extended a fat and hairy paw, which the bank president, seeing no escape, took reluctantly.

"Mr. Hogan is a benefactor of mine," pursued the clergyman, "or rather, of my church. He lacks the outward manifestations of culture to some extent, but—his heart and soul amply make up the deficiency. A diamond, a true diamond in the rough! Since he entered the parish our poor have profited greatly."

"His hobby—to use a cant expression—is what he terms an 'anti-poverty fund'; a most laudable one. I am sure. You see, to speak frankly, though to a small extent, he is illiterate. Mr. Hogan has amassed a considerable fortune in the past two



By George Allen England.

at the Commercial Trust Company, and, sitting at one of the little glass-topped tables, made out a check for \$12,000, which the Reverend Mr. Benedict signed, and Mr. Hogan carefully "X'd," chewing the while on an unlighted cigar.

"Here's where Goodrich makes his contribution to the anti-poverty fund, eh?" remarked the clergyman in a low tone. "It's double-clinched and diamond-hitched. Provided we can turn the trick before it pollutes the atmosphere, we work. When I got next to this coin-mill in '88 I vowed I'd come back some day for another bunch, and here I am! This is what the wise ones call the predestination as an ideal city. This must be carried forward in no sense as a local project, but must be a great national purpose in which the entire citizenship of the nation co-operates." That is the sentiment with which the present-day incumbent of the office first occupied in 1790 by Maj. Peter Charles L'Enfant proposes to "carry on" the plans for the Federal city on the shore of the Potomac as originally made under direction of the first Washington and extended by the Senate park commission plan in 1901.

Now this job of "Officer in charge of public buildings and grounds" for which President Harding selected Col. Clarence O. Sherrill of the Engineers Corps is so many-sided that people might consider him a "jack of all trades." Here are some of his duties:

* * *

(1) Custodian of the nation's memorials, including the Washington Monument; the Lincoln Memorial, which is the greatest monument ever erected by any nation to a single individual, costing \$1,500,000, and the Memorial Amphitheater in Arlington national cemetery, the nation's shrine for its hero dead.

(2) Member of the Alaska inter-department development board.

(11) War Department representative on the National Research Council.

(12) War Department representative on the committee of the engineering council for co-ordination of government contracts.

(2) In charge of the twenty-three buildings representing the State, War and Navy group, requiring a force of 1,250 for their upkeep and housing approximately 30,000 government employees. Two of these buildings, the Navy Annex and the Munitions buildings, are the largest office buildings in the world.

(3) Caretaker in chief of 3,500 acres of parks in the nation's capi-

COL. SHERRILL ENTHUSIASTIC IN BEAUTIFYING OF WASHINGTON

Engineer Officer With Many Duties Is Working on Parkway System Which He Deems Greatest in the World.

WASHINGTON must be developed not only as the most beautiful city in the world, but to fulfill its predestination as an ideal city. This must be carried forward in no sense as a local project, but must be a great national purpose in which the entire citizenship of the nation co-operates.

(4) Military aid to the President, attending him on all official occasions, and also attendant on Mr. Harding whenever she appears at any function as "first lady of the land."

(5) In charge of the propagating gardens and of decorating the White House for all occasions. There is a group of seventeen greenhouses in which are raised more than three-quarters of a million flowers each year for the parks scattered throughout the city.

(6) Commanding officer of the park police doing duty in all the parks and all government reservations in the National Capital.

(7) Member of the public buildings commission, of which Senator Smoot is chairman, and which assigns office space in all buildings occupied by government in action, whether owned or leased by Uncle Sam.

(8) Member of the zoning commission which regulates the height and use to which buildings may be put in the capital.

(9) Member of the board of surveys and maps, the first definite step toward reorganization and consolidation in government service. There were fifteen original drawing plans. He is chairman of the committee drawing up plans for co-ordination.

(10) Member of the Alaska inter-department development board.

(11) War Department representative on the National Research Council.

(12) War Department representative on the committee of the engineering council for co-ordination of government contracts.

(2) Which prompts the question which I put to him: "How do you manage to do it all? Folks might be just as well in. No one man can do all of that and do it right." His answer showed that he has learned the secret of being a good executive, and shows why President Harding selected him for the new position of federal officials. He said: "I couldn't do it, only I have an efficient organization to carry on the work for me." Pressed to elucidate a little further for the benefit of the public,

he explained his method: "To swing so many activities, it is essential for me to pick out good men to take charge of the various activities and give them the best possible supervision and direction. It is not enough to give an order, but to see that the order is properly carried out."

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Col. Sherrill is a fine example of the new type of official President Harding sought out—full of "pep" and zeal; with high ideals of service and idealistic vision moderated by practical experience; deeply conscious that this country belongs to all the people, and that the best way to have a high type of patriotism and morale in the country is to maintain and develop it through happiness and prosperity of all the people during days of peace.

He is alert, vigorous, genial, with a hearty hand-clasp and ready smile. His courtesy and affability make him an ideal selection for military aid. In that capacity he has to be present at all visits of foreign officials to the White House.

The course of procedure in the Senate park commission plan is:

(1) The park commission plan is carried through the city, the parks scattered throughout the city.

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be chief of staff of that division during the Argonne defense. After the armistice he joined the 3d Army under General Dickman, and drew up plans for occupation of the Côte de la Haute, the head of the Argonne. He was called back to the United States in the spring of 1919 to take charge of all the fortification construction work of the United States government under the chief of engineers, which position he filled until he became chief engineer carrying along the Le-Enfant plan for the development of the nation's capital.

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"We are working here now on the greatest parkway system in the world," Col. Sherrill explained with enthusiasm, with the frankness of a boy acknowledging his gratification at being the executive officer in charge of carrying out Washington's "dream" for the nation's capital. He pointed out that "Washington is already unique among the great cities of the world on account of the tremendous area given over to parks in the very center of the city.

"We contemplate a parkway en-

circulating the city," he pointed